

The Enrichment of Life



By

Rajadharmapravina Diwan Bahadur

K. S. CHANDRASEKHARA AIYAR

(Retired Chief Judge, Mysore)

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FOREWORD

Sri K. S. Chandrasekhara Aiyar, the author of his invaluable essay, was an outstanding personality of this state and was held in the highest esteem throughout his long and distinguished career. He won the first rank in the very first competitive examination held for the Mysore Civil Service and rose to be a Member of the State Executive Council and Chief Judge of the State. He was a judge of the Chief Court for a record period of seventeen years, and it will surprise many, when we all take the theory of separation of powers for granted, that he held his post as a judge and that as a Member of the Executive Council together for some time. He has left his hallmark as a great judge in the reported decisions of the Court. But he was much more than a distinguished public servant. He had absorbed the best in all cultures though he was firmly rooted in the ancient wisdom of our land. He lived a life day in and day out fully in conformity with the highest standards of nobility, dignity and compassion. He was one of the earliest to join the Theosophical Society and held a position of high respect there throughout his life. He was fortunate in having as his life companion a wife who was equally noble and humane. Srimathi Sarvathamma's contribution to the cause of the uplift and welfare of women and children has found concrete expression in the institutions she founded and built up.

Sri Chandrasekhara Aiyar lived for almost four decades after his formal retirement from his official career. And they were also years equally dedicated to the service of the public. The Government availed itself of his mature experience and wisdom in several ways. He was for many years the president of the Public Library, Bangalore. He was the Chairman of the Committee on Co-operation, the Committee on Jail Reform and the Committee on the Revision of Hindu Law relating to Women. The reports of all these Committees are of outstanding value ; and his Committee's report on Women's Rights resulted in Legislation which led the way to similar reform in the All-India field.

He was a great connoisseur and patron of Music and was largely responsible for the promotion and maintenance of high standards in that field, particularly in that of Karnatak Music.

This essay may be said to incorporate the guidance that such a noble mind with its rich and varied experience could give to illumine the path of young and old alike. The writing is of the best literary quality. It is simple and yet sublime. Many sentences can be picked up which will ever live in one's memory. Here are a few :

“We reap as we sow. We sow an act and reap a habit, sow a habit, and reap character, sow a character and reap a destiny

"Labour that is enjoyed becomes so much easier to perform."

"Accuracy is another name for love of truth."

"Exercise is labour without weariness."

"Reflection is to knowledge what life is to food, the way to make it a living part of ourselves."

"To be able to discern excellence is the next best thing to possessing it."

"Every Truth agrees with all others."

"Music is the language of the spirit, an echo of the invisible world."

"Solitude is often the best Society."

While the matters dealt with in this essay are of universal and permanent value, there are many enlightening guidelines of practical utility in one's daily life.

Though the author lived a long and distinguished life and many knew him and virtually every one knew of him in his day, it is but natural that as time passes, people's memory of this noble personality will fade. But the fruits of his contribution will ever remain by the way it has influenced the lives of the people.

It is as much a tribute to the high quality of the contents of this brochure as to the discriminating mind

of my life-long friend, Dr. K. Rama Sastry, who has done me the honour of asking me to write this foreword, that he should have thought of making it available to the public by undertaking its re-publication and in this manner also served to perpetuate the memory of a sage-like personality.

Bangalore

Nittoor Sreenivasa Rau

17-6-1979



Publisher's Note

It was by chance I came across this essay by the late Justice K. S. Chandrasekhara Aiyar. I was struck by its profundity and how it could be of inestimable value in enriching the lives of people if it could be made available. So, I approached his grandson Sri N. Balachandran, for permission to reprint. He promptly and generously granted the permission, for which I am deeply grateful to him.

I should not fail to express my indebtedness to my old friend, Sri Nittoor Sreenivasa Rau (former Chief Justice of Karnataka), for having responded to my request and contributed a very informative foreword.

I am thankful to M/S Triveni Printers for their neat and prompt printing.

I venture to place the brochure before the public with the earnest hope that many persons will profit by it.

7-6-1979

Kudli Rama Sastry

ERRATA

P. No	Line No	Printed	To Read
2	14	<i>Epitomiz</i>	<i>Epitomize</i>
2	28	<i>uneral</i>	<i>funeral</i>
7	17	<i>exerci e</i>	<i>exercise</i>
24	12	<i>existence,</i>	<i>existence.</i>

THE ENRICHMENT OF LIFE

Life a trust :

Life is by universal assent the most precious endowment of mankind, man's dearest possession on earth. The ultimate nature of life may be a mystery, of which little more is known than that it is some kind of purposive activity associated with organisms. But the process of living is to all creatures the most absorbing of all experiences. Life, says a Greek proverb, is a gift of nature, but to live beautifully is the gift of wisdom. Conscious, intelligent existence is a thing beyond price, entrusted to each person. It is something to be made the most of, and not squandered away without due return.

2. The enterprise of living :

Life has been likened to a fairy tale written by the hand of God. To every individual his own career may well be romance, however drab its external aspects. To make the most of the flying moments, always (as far as possible) to think truly, to act worthily, to feel deeply and kind-heartedly, to be sensitive to things fine and elevating, to resist temptation, rout out mean impulse, and master unruly passion, to maintain under all circumstances an inner reserve of courage and fortitude—is this not in truth to treat existence as a marvellous enterprise, full of incident, instruction and inspiration ? A whole day lived in this adventurous,

this lyrical manner, may bring a man nearer to his goal than years of stagnation and half-hearted endeavour.

3. *Each day a little life :*

Each day of ours is itself a little life; and no one day is exactly like another. Every morning we awake to a new sense of being, a new birth under fresh conditions and prospects of its own. The past is done with save for its results ; the future is yet to come. The critical, the decisive moment, is that in front of us. Out of the eternal present is woven the texture of our lives. Wisely laid out, its every unit should make an effective contribution however small by itself, and help to epitomize the progress of a life time between the rising and the setting of the sun. Progress does not depend on length of days, but on achievement and its quality, which is not the same as its size. It is a matter of experience, not of years.

4. *The moulding of destiny :*

Life is opportunity. It is made up of a series of opportunities for making decisions and acting on them. The art of living (which is the practical side of philosophy) consists essentially in the seizing of opportunities big and small : not merely waiting for such as may turn up, but also on occasion creating them. In this way we can make of our life very much what we choose it shall be, a triumphal march or a funeral procession. As a matter of fact, we are engaged every moment, unconsciously for the most

part, in fashioning it. We begin to do so in the early years of infancy, and keep on at the task till our last breaths. We are ourselves largely the products of our own thoughts, habits and actions. We reap as we sow. We sow an act, and reap a habit; sow a habit, and reap a character; sow a character, and reap a destiny.

5. *Purpose and endeavour :*

How important, then, it is that we do not simply drift along, but exercise choice and discrimination in regard to our aims and ways in life. The man who has no clear, steady purpose to guide him is like a ship tossing about on the high seas without a compass or rudder. Purpose and endeavour, combining in well-directed effort, is the doublesided wing which lifts the soul to higher altitudes.

6. *Deliberation and action :*

Action must be the result of deliberation, of prudent forethought. But once a decision is reached, it must be carried out with firmness and promptitude, undeterred by thought of possible dangers, unless they be very great. It is a good maxim to embark on nothing rashly and without good reason, and to fear nothing once action has been launched. Many of the noblest enterprises of life might never have been undertaken, if all the difficulties and defects could be foreseen.

7. *Failure and success ;*

The conflict with obstacles makes for strength and self-reliance, and brings out capacities that might

otherwise remain dormant. Failure as such should not dishearten ; for it is the seeking, not the finding, which helps the soul to grow. More valuable lessons are often to be learnt from initial frustrations and misadventures than from easy victories. Those who work for success are generally anxious and troubled, ever reckoning their chances and pre-occupied with results. But one who cares nothing for success as such, and only for doing that which is right, adds joy to duty.

8. *Choice of work :*

Out of all the work which comes crowding in to be done, the wise man will accept so much only as he has time, capacity and aptitude for. Where there is room for choice, he will give preference to something useful and important in itself, which comes directly in his way as if seeking him, or which carries a strong appeal to his mind. Labour that is enjoyed becomes so much the easier to perform. But even drudgery ceases to be irksome, and becomes interesting, if accepted cheerfully and entered upon with zest, instead of in a mood of repining.

9. *Spirit of service :*

The man who strives whole-heartedly to be the instrument of God's will, and has trained himself to do everything as though the Lord were doing it through him, is able to work with unerring aim. "You have a right to action, never to its fruits", says a well-known scripture. "Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not unto men", says

another. Ours is the duty and the privilege of rendering service in the spirit of dedication and non-attachment. When we have done our best, making full use of our resources and opportunities, we shall have done enough, and may contentedly leave the issue with the power with whom rests the final disposal.

10. *Efficiency :*

We do our best only when we perform efficiently all that we undertake, with earnestness and perseverance, order, method and accuracy. Accuracy is another name for love of truth. It can be made a matter of habit, just as easily as the opposite fault. Order implies a time and place for everything, and the doing of all things in their proper turn, without hurry or slovenliness. System or method makes even the hardest designs easier to execute. The shortest way to do many things is to concentrate attention on one thing at a time, and not fritter it away among several. A complicated task becomes simpler by beginning with the most general outline, and then gradually filling in the details. Instead of being dismayed by looking too much at all there is to do, a difficult undertaking should be split up into convenient parts, and each tackled by itself. The separate results may afterwards be fitted together into a comprehensive whole. Time and energy, moreover, are multiplied by prudent distribution and proper use.

11. *Health :*

Health is the physical basis of efficiency, as also of happiness and comfort. The body has been com-

pared to a well-set clock, which keeps good time as long as it is not indiscreetly tampered with. Once it goes out of order, it is not likely to be as satisfactory as before, however skillfully it may be repaired. The physical body is a living instrument, and must be neither coddled nor neglected, but treated with proper consideration for its legitimate needs. It must at the same time be trained to function in close co-operation with its owner. It is better and easier to maintain it in condition through a regimen of "health unbought", than to rely on drugs and doctors for the recovery of lost vigour.

12. The primary needs :

The primary needs of sound health include some with which nature provides us freely, such as fresh air and bright gentle sunshine; others, such as food, which call for man's co-operation to produce them; and yet others, such as rest, exercise, and temperance, which lie mostly within our own control. A healthy diet must be nutritious without being too rich, and toothsome, without much seasoning. A certain variety adds both to excellence and relish. The best of sauces is hunger, while an occasional fast purifies the system by reducing harmful accumulations. Equally important with assimilation is the thorough elimination of waste, through lungs, liver, bowels and skin. The surface of the body must be kept clean and free from malodour. Dress has a moral effect on character and conduct. Garments, in the case of both sexes, may well combine the three requisites of being cheap and simple, comfortable and protective, tastefully chosen and worn with grace.

13. *Rest :*

Repose, the foster-nurse of nature, is the greatest of restoratives. The still hours of the night should be devoted to its soothing action, for as long as will bring recuperation to the tired frame and refreshment to the weary mind. An occasional difficulty in going to sleep may grow into a permanent obsession, if habitually relieved by resort to drugs. The gentle goddess is best wooed by natural methods and the strengthening of self-confidence. Lying in bed with limbs relaxed, the sufferer from insomnia should divert his mind from present preoccupations to scenes and events not closely concerning himself, or recall soothing phases or melodious verses from memory. An unexciting book or even an easy piece of work may help to bring on slumber through lassitude.

14. *Exercise :*

Exercise is labour without weariness. It helps to relax the mind, keeps the muscles in proper tension and the joints supple, and promotes free circulation. Specialized athletics, which over-develop some muscles at the expense of others, are less useful for health than exercises like running, climbing and swimming, which bring as many parts of the frame as possible into play. Walking is one of the best, as it is the simplest, and is adapted to all constitutions. It has the added recommendation of giving one the choice of silent thought or congenial company.

15. *Moderation :*

Nervous resilience and energy are conserved by

prudence and moderation in the exercise of the bodily functions and in the indulgence of the natural appetites. They are wasted by intemperance and indiscretion, and impaired by prolonged neglect of maladies like eyestrain, teeth troubles, and irregularities of blood pressure. Surges of intense emotion, such as sudden anger or fright, may cause serious nervous leaks, or interfere with normal secretions, and even injure the blood vessels. Conversely, many psychic disturbances are traceable to morbid physical conditions.

16. *Emotions :*

Mind and emotion are closely intertwined, and continuously influence each other. The emotional nature acts through a vehicle much more fluid than the physical, more sensitive and delicate, and very apt to be unstable. It likes violent vibrations, whether of excitement or of depression, and wants to change them frequently. Ill-balanced emotions, uncontrolled desires, unchecked appetites, these not only grind out the forces of mind and body, but open the door to a host of mischiefs and perils. They account for much of the unrest and unhappiness in the world. The passions are like fire, useful in a hundred ways, and dangerous only through excess. They are not to be maimed or suppressed, but purged and purified and harnessed to the service of the soul as channels for its aspirations, affections and sympathies.

17. *Internal enemies : (Enemies)*

Our greatest enemies to peace are internal.

Pride, it is said, robs a man of God, and envy, of his neighbour ; but anger robs him of himself, by depriving him of his reason. To be angry beyond limit is to revenge another's fault on oneself. By controlling a moment's anger we may avoid the remorse of a lifetime. It is cheaper to pardon than to resent ; it saves the expense of anger, the cost of hatred, and the waste of spirits. The brave man knows no malice. Equally the man that is wise will not cherish hatreds or jealousies, which can but embitter the full enjoyment of the good things he already has. He will be big enough in mind not to feel hurt or humiliated by what some other person may do to him. Over-sensitiveness does not make for felicity. Another common failing is irritability, often about comparative trifles. Peevishness, if habitual, sours a man's disposition, and not only undermines his own happiness, but acts as a menace to domestic peace and social harmony in his circle.

18. Needless apprehensions :

Of all the foes which seek abode within us, fear is the most formidable, because the most insidious. Fear cripples the spirit, and makes it as impotent for effective action as for calm deliberation. The apprehension of evil often does greater harm than the evil apprehended. Most fears are exaggerated, if not baseless. Anticipation is usually worse than the actuality. Allied to fear is anxiety, which is more difficult to throw off than sorrow ; time assuages most sorrows, but anxiety grows with time and thrives

upon indulgence. Care is "no cure but only a corrosive"; it is but folly to worry in advance about trifles which may not after all materialize. Life is difficult enough as it is; why spoil it by introducing an element of melancholy apprehension?

19. *Contentment* :

Cheerfulness and good humour make for health of body and mind, and conduce to the proper enjoyment of life. Contentment is a sovereign remedy for the ills of life, an equable temper, an invaluable shield against most of its troubles. The man who finds no satisfaction in himself seeks for it in vain elsewhere. To think too much about oneself and one's needs, about what one would like to have from other people, and so on, is a sure road to disillusionment and discontent. The best plan for living happily is to depend as far as possible upon oneself, to make the most of the good things one already has, and to limit one's wants to the few real needs which can be easily satisfied, eschewing those which are redundant or imaginary. As has been well said, to have what we want is riches; but to be able to do without is more than riches, it is power. Simple tastes are as much matter of habit as luxury. Practice can make self-denial not only facile, but even pleasant.

20. *Habit*

Habit is the best of servants, but the worst of masters. Kept under scrutiny and control, it is a great help to rational living; left to grow as it likes, it may become a serious fetter and a drag. Habit, says a

proverb, is at first a cobweb and at last a cable. To suppress a first desire is easier than to stem those that follow. "A sapling may be easily uprooted, but with a tree an axe is needed". To dally with temptation is to start a hidden fire which may grow into a conflagration. The most fearful characteristic of vice is its irresistible fascination, the ease with which it sweeps away resolution. Familiarity strips vice of its enormity, so much so that "he that has committed a sin twice no longer considers it a sin". The bonds of an established bad habit may, nevertheless, be broken by weakening its grip through diminished indulgence. Every determined effort of abstinence makes easier the next, until, when a certain point is reached, the victim becomes able to assert his new-found strength and achieve full freedom.

1. Will :

Often a sudden or intense initial effort succeeds in uprooting the evil tendency once for all, and restoring the authority of the will. No man indeed is really free, really safe, who is not master of himself, and cannot enforce his resolution at any crisis or emergency. People succumb, not so much for want of understanding, as through lack of will and habitual disobedience to its behests. Like other faculties, the will is strengthened by cultivation and use, and progressively enfeebled by neglect. The enlightened will is guided by reason and the dictates of conscience, and never swayed by mere passion or impulse. The will is most effective when it acts in conjunction with the imagination. Where the two are in conflict, the imagination usually carries the day.

22. *Imagination :*

Imagination is the visualizing power of the mind, and can conjure up all manner of shapes actual or fanciful, and lend them body and substance. It is a creative faculty with an almost illimitable range of operation. But it may work for good or inure for evil, according as it subserves the higher self, or runs riot at the whim and pleasure of the lower nature. As has been acutely remarked, a vile imagination, once indulged, gets the key of our minds, and can get it again very easily whether we will or not, bringing with it other spirits more wicked than itself. On the other hand, the well controlled imagination greatly enhances the quality and the beauty and mystery of life. By presenting to the mind scenes and characters more perfect than those we are acquainted with, it creates a healthy dissatisfaction, and so stimulates improvement. The imagination can influence not only our mental and emotional constitution, but even the physical conditions of health and vigour. In these and other ways it is capable of releasing invisible forces which bring about tangible results.

23. *Intellect :*

The mind, like the body, is nourished by what it assimilates, and not by all that goes into it. It is the part of education to train a man to observe and think, and not simply fill his mind with accumulations of others. Reflection is to knowledge what digestion is to food, the way to make it a living part of ourselves. By turning an idea over, by considering it in various

aspects and in relation to other ideas, by chewing the cud as it were, we extract its valuable elements. Thinking, to be worth the name, should be orderly and precise, one idea leading to another related or relevant idea. It is on the regularity and perspicuity of our thinking that memory itself depends. Meditation is a further and more difficult step, in which the attention is centred on some one definite idea, instead of passing from one to another. This often leads to an intuitive knowledge of the object meditated on and a direct realisation of its true nature.

24. *The vacant mind :*

The mind is an instrument restless and changeable by nature, and resistive to control. Hard it is to curb as is the wind. Further more, it always wants something to work upon and turn over and over. 'If the brain sows not corn, it plants thistles'. The vacant mind generates evil thoughts as naturally as a stagnant pool breeds worms. It may be compared to an untenanted, unguarded building, which offers strong temptation to vagrant ideas and malefic suggestions to intrude. The prudent owner will choose wholesome thoughts, true, wise, beautiful, cheering, elevating to occupy the tenement; and he will see that it is kept bright and clean, lighted by cheerfulness and good humour, and warmed by human sympathy and kindness.

25. *Power of thought and example :*

In our power to think and feel, we possess a

force which we are ever using, without always realizing its potentialities. Thought power on its own plane is just as real and definite a thing as money in its : sometimes it may actually be of greater help. A strong thought-form will protect its object from temptation, from fear, or from danger, acting for the purpose as a real guardian-angel. An earnest wish or fervent prayer works towards its own fulfilment according to its clearness and persistence, and may even in deserving cases draw down help from above. Apart from the conscious exercise of thought, there is the quiet but none the less pervasive effect of life and example. Every individual, great or small, is a centre of radiating influence, touching at many points the lives and characters of the people around him. The strength of it will naturally vary with the individual source.

26. *Character :*

More powerful than the influences, palpable and impalpable, which play upon a man from outside, is the accumulated effect of his own thinking. Every idea, every desire or feeling, however evanescent, leaves its trace on personality. The dominant thoughts influence the habitual outlook, and sooner or later find their way into action. Each man is thus the architect of his own character, that which represents what he is in himself, more surely than he is the architect of his fortune. The foundations of character lie deep in the motives and principles actuating the individual, in the ideals towards which his life is set. The corner-stones of the edifice are the great virtues

in which all systems of morality and religion lay stress.

27. *Virtue :*

Virtue is not a negative attitude, the mere abstention from wrong-doing, but implies a positive disposition to see and do what is right in the various relations we sustain, to ourselves, to our fellow-beings and to God. Some virtues like truth, justice, wisdom and compassion, are so grand in their ideal perfection that they serve to imagine Divinity itself for our comprehension. Others, such as courage, fortitude, patience, gentleness, humility, delicacy, forbearance, moderation, are among the noblest attributes of humanity. Virtue is, in the best sense, its own reward, its possession may, no doubt, often bring some incidental advantage. But if it is practised with an eye mainly to this, and not primarily for the unmixed satisfaction of doing that which is right, it loses its purity and becomes alloyed with selfishness. It is enough recommendation for virtue that it enormously enhances the quality and multiplies the value of life.

28. *Affections :*

Life has been described as a flower of which love is the honey. The love that seeks no return purges the heart of the taint of selfishness. The wealth of a soul is measured by how much it can feel of genuine affection, its poverty by how little. Pity is the tenderest part of love; and where pity dwells, there abides the peace of God. Nothing but infinite pity is

sufficient for the infinite pathos of human life. Next only to love and pity, among the noblest attributes of human nature, is the warmth of sympathy. To sympathize, runs a fine saying, is to share the inward fragrance of each other's heart. Genuine sympathy combines both charity and understanding. Itself valuing truth above everything, it freely pardons error; and it loves the offender even while detesting the offence.

29. *Associations :*

We know our fellow-men only so far as we can feel with and for them through close association. Our ways and manners and not infrequently our opinions and prejudices, are unconsciously formed and moulded after those of the people with whom we habitually associate. No man can live for himself alone; a thousand threads of sympathy and mutual influence and advantage connect us all intimately. Happiness is multiplied by being shared : and there is no greater blessing than to have true friends, staunch and select, if few. Truest of friends, and the greatest source of joy and comfort, is a good and faithful wife. A hundred men (it was said) may make an encampment, but it needs a woman to make a home. Beyond the circle of friendship, a sociable person will add to his enjoyment of life by cultivating congenial acquaintanceship. Good company is better than rich food, and no seasoning can equal the relish of instructive and agreeable conversation.

30. *Use and abuse of speech :*

It is sad to note the lax and callous way in which the wonderful faculty of speech is often used. There are some who say or write cruel things with deliberate intention to wound. Many more indulge in careless or inaccurate statements which cause as much harm as wilfully false and malicious one. Gossip is among the commonest of social evils. Much ordinary conversation is idle and superficial. The golden rule as to speech has been thus stated : "It is well to speak little: better still to say nothing, unless you are quite sure that what you wish to say is true, kind, and helpful". Its strict observance will not make one a 'good talker'. But a good talker in the conventional sense is not always a good worker, or necessarily a centre of healthy influence. In any case, one who follows the rule will have less cause for repentance on account of vain, careless and injurious speech.

1. *Our judgement of others :*

There is nearly always something to praise, even if there be something to blame, in everybody; and it is the part of brotherliness, as well as a valuable exercise in appreciation, to discover by preference that which is praiseworthy. It is best to judge well of others, even if our judgment be better than the actuality. By giving a man credit for meaning well, we shall not only be right in nine cases out of ten, but shall be helping him to grow out of a lower into a higher incentive. To think evil of another, on the other hand, tends to

aggravate any wrong predisposition that might already exist in the victim's nature. It may even implant in him the seed of a new fault or evil motive, or expose him to temptations to wrong-doing which might not otherwise have come in his way. In addition to all this, the offender fills his own imagination with debasing ideas and injurious suspicions. To mind one's own business, and abstain from needlessly interfering with other people and criticizing their ways, is a wholesome principle of conduct.

32. *Appreciation :*

Appreciation has close affinity with sympathy, differing mainly in that the head rather than the heart plays a more decisive part. It presupposes a critical judgment which, without being blind to faults, is quick to recognize merit. To be able to discern excellence is the next best thing to possessing it. By looking out for points to admire, instead of casting about for flaws to condemn, we shall nearly always find something at least of what we have been seeking. The pleasure of criticism, it has been justly remarked, takes from us the higher pleasure of being deeply moved by beautiful things.

33. *Truth. beauty. goodness :*

To discover what is true, to admire what is beautiful, and to practise what is good, are among the primary objects of philosophy. Truth is not always easy to recognize at sight; else would not error be so rampant. But speaking generally, truth illumines,

While error confuses Truth, moreover, brings increasing conviction the more carefully a matter is considered. Then, again, every truth agrees with all others; and once established, it falls into its own place in the vast body of knowledge. There is in most things of nature a core of beauty, apart from utility; but beauty lies in the eye of the beholder, and only reveals itself to those who have in them the sense of beauty. Moral beauty, the "daily beauty" in a person's life, is more impressive than even the beauty of nature, and owes to those who possess it a strange, an inexplicable power. Goodness is the better part of godliness. It is another name for love, which is the realisation of the unity of all sentient beings within the One Divine life.

4. *Objective interests :*

Too much pre-occupation with self dwarfs the future, and leads to boredom and unhappiness. The cure for morbid self-centredness is to make more of other objects, and less of ourselves. The man who can forget himself in a wide variety of objective interests, keeping mind active and curiosity awake along many roads, is always fresh and bright. Fortunate is he whose ordinary avocations take him out of himself; all more so, if he can switch on at will to some cherished task outside the daily round, and appealing tastes and talents not otherwise regularly engaged. A well-ordered life must provide leisure for those other satisfactions which contribute so much to personal enjoyment and happiness. Some of them are the delightful forms of recreation, like the theatre, cinema, and musical concert.

35. *Favourite pursuits :*

Of hobbies so called, there are those which combine change of occupation and relief from ennui with renewal of energy and renovation of spirit. Typical of them all is horticulture, the laying out and the gradual evolving of a garden of one's own with the unadulterated joy of open-air activity. Travel, over and above its value as relaxation and change, is an important accessory to education and worldly experience. Even the stay-at-home can have some of its benefits vicariously; books of travel are often enthralling; they spare one the trouble and annoyances of wayfaring, not to mention the question of expense! A mine of fascinating instruction lies open to those interested in a comparative study of languages. The intimate connection between thought and expression, the close similarities and often significant differences among the families of speech, the labours of linguists to simplify existing media or to fashion new ones on rational lines, - things like these yield abundant food for intelligent curiosity.

36. *Treasures of the mind :*

Language holds the key to the treasures of the mind, through the written and the printed word. The praise of books is an inexhaustible theme. Of all the sources of unalloyed pleasure and profit open to the literate man, the richest by far is a cultivated taste for reading by means of books chosen for their quality as well as to suit the individual need. We can command at will the society of those creative minds who live in their works. Without fee or reward we can take

counsel with the best intellects of all ages and countries, and converse day by day with the wisest, wittiest, tenderest, bravest, and noblest characters who have adorned humanity. When we are weary of the living, who alas are not always easy to associate with, we can betake ourselves to the illustrious dead, the immortals who have nothing in their composition of querulousness, envy or scheming. With their aid we may build around us an atmosphere of quiet content very different from the hunderd round of restlessness and inanity.

37. *Self-expression :*

To write is a great help to reading of the profitable kind which is study. It is besides, an efficacious way of keeping the mind from brooding and from aimless wandering. Above all, it has an important role as a medium of self-expression. Any literate person of average education may express himself interestingly, if he has something worth saying and can say it simply and naturally. But literary power,—the ability to clothe thought in clear, effective, and appropriate language,—demands assiduous cultivation and some natural talent. More important than style or manner is idea or matter. There are few who can offer really new ideas about old facts. But even common things may be put in an uncommon, arresting way, and known truths told attractively as seen through a fresh pair of eyes. An apt quotation is often as good as an original remark.

38. *The spell of music :*

Music is the language of the spirit, an echo of

the invisible world. It is not easy to depict in words the subtle, soothing, lingering spell of melody, that "inarticulate speech which leads us to the edge of the infinite", and lets us for moments gaze into its depths. While its highest graces flow from the feelings of the heart, its charm and beauty are enhanced by rhythm, the ordered movement of sounds in regulated succession. There is hardly a mood which cannot find expression in appropriate measures grave, gay or sad. Music washes away from the soul the dust of everyday life, and is entitled to its place among the primary wants of our nature, next only to food, raiment and shelter. Almost all persons can enjoy music of some kind. But its higher and more refined types can only be fully appreciated by the cultivated taste.

39. *The mission of art :*

The same is true in other spheres of art also, in poetry, painting, sculpture, architecture. The mission of art is to reveal the hidden or underlying significance of things, concrete or abstract, through idealized forms and images shaped in material appropriate to each art. It holds the mirror up to nature, not by mere imitation, but by the more adequate rendering of a beauty or a truth, seen or imagined. Art may be said to begin where nature leaves off.

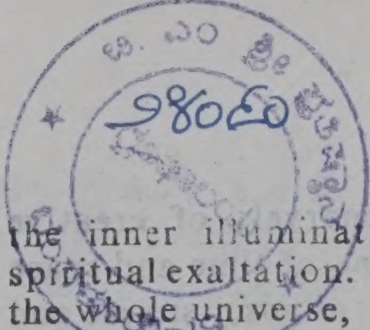
40. *The marvels of nature :*

Unlike the conceptions of human skill and genius, the works of the great architect of the Universe do not depend for their full enjoyment on man-made

rules and conventions. The marvels of creative activity which issue from the loom of time and space come home to all unsophisticated minds, simple and unlearned. Nature is prodigal of her gifts, and scatters almost at our doors, in endless variety and profusion, things of loveliness and grandeur calculated to evoke sheer delight and wonder. The sensitive person can always find comfort and refreshment in the lap of Mother Earth, gazing on her mobile countenance in all her shifting moods, observing the manifold shapes and colours of scenery and vegetation, and marking the swift passage of the hours and the slow rotation of the seasons in their course. For the contemplative spirit which enjoys the free air and wide open spaces there is indeed "a pleasure in the pathless woods", "a rapture on the lonely shore", and "society, where none intrudes, by the deep sea, and music in its roar."

41. *The subtle realm of solitude :*

Solitude is oftentimes the best society. We are least alone when we are most at home to our real selves, in the company of noble thoughts and pleasing memories, and away from the distraction and turmoil of the busy crowd. The rigorous exclusion of disturbing elements, - the body's obstinate assertion of itself, the unceasing suggestions of the baser inclinations, and the self-centred worries of the lower mind, - makes it possible for the soul to contact a subtler environment, the spiritual realm which extends all around us. In its stillness and silence, when other sounds are hushed, mystics of all times have listened to the Voice of God, and gained intimate revelations of things real. Not all of us can have, as yet,



the inner illumination which comes in moments of spiritual exaltation. But since the Divine Life pervades the whole universe, some realisation of its power and influence can be had even at lower levels.

42. *The inward life :*

As we submit ourselves to its quiet creative action and strive to "live with God and in His Presence", our real self will undergo a marked transformation through purification and enlargement. And with it our inward life will grow in seriousness and intensity. It is the inward life which is the really significant part of our existence, The outer life of vicissitude and circumstance is but an episode in the long pilgrimage of the soul. We have to go through with it because there are lessons which can only be learnt in the gross surroundings of earth. When we have mastered them, we shall pass on to other and higher spheres of being.

43. *Perfection through daily renewal :*

Continuous progression is the law of eternal life, and there is no limit to possible perfection. The urge to evolve is ever at work in all beings, whether they are conscious of it or not. But to the extent that they severally understand and co-operate with the forces concerned, the pace of progress will be quicker and surer. Peace as well as strength consists in finding out the Will of God which represents the Scheme of Evolution, and going in the way that it is working. Perfection is a matter of degree, and development stage by stage the appointed way. And though the graduations which lie between "man who is God upon a small scale" and "God who is Man upon a scale that is vast" are immense and seemingly infinite, they cannot daunt the awakened spirit who realizes his Divine affinity and is bent on attaining his heritage. The glorious consummation is brought ever nearer, as we take our lives in our own hands and renew them on higher levels day by day.

